

sewers, bearing off the contamination to the Essex or Plumstead Marshes, must ere long be set about.

As I suggested some years back, and as many others have re-echoed very lately, such main ducts might be made useful as the foundation for rival causeways and quays, tending at once to the convenience of increased traffic, the beauty of the river, the inestimable advantage of tidal docks in the marginal reserves (as between Westminster and Waterloo-bridges), and above all, to the improved health of the whole population.

There is no necessity for a reach of mud-bank (a "*mare morto*") in a width of 200 feet at Whitehall, increased beyond the breadth of the river at Westminster or Blackfriars. It is true that the constant undulation caused by steam paddle-wheels has washed all the mud away, save at one point (the flaggers at Buckingham-stairs); but the constant agitation keeps the filth in solution; and as population increases, so the disgusting tribute thickens, befouls, and blackens the flood, until it has become so noxious that passengers by the boats avoid it on business, and so appalling is the baneful reek that parties of pleasure have long since migrated with the Thames Yacht Club beyond the Nore.

These facts are palpable and unmistakable, and must lead to something like a conservancy of the Thames, in a sense more serviceable than corporate swan-hopping.

Next in order, though more serious in importance, is the total revision and regulation of the vital (or virtual) water-supply. This is in many hands, and great is the company of the experimenters. Little has, however, been practically done; and probably until some other dire visitation impel the community, through fear of contagion, to make a combined and earnest effort, the supporters of Artesian wells, of gathering grounds, and other aqueous speculations, may continue to wrangle and amuse themselves—the citizens remaining content whilst trade prospers and debts only are liquidated.

More intimately in combination with the air of London the smoke acts on the constitution of the civic family: by night there is a partial immunity, save where tall chimneys vomit incessant volumes, begriming the fairest structures, and covering the furniture of inmost chambers with a sooty deposit. Why the Act of Parliament has not been carried out to redress this inconvenience seems strange, seeing that some manufacturing towns in the north have abated the nuisance, and that it is perfectly practicable.

The City, which is now but a limb of this commercial capital, has taken precedence in reforming the fuliginous plague: already our mornings are extended by a full half-hour, our evenings prolonged half an hour more, and the intervening day, unveiled of fog, is 20 per cent. more telling under sunny heaven. From and after the 1st of January, all opaque smoke is absolutely interdicted, and it will be found that the proprietors of factories, smelting-houses, and all establishments requiring large furnaces are gainers and not losers by the prohibition.

As the cost of the newly-applied principle of construction, as applied to coal combustion on a large scale, is found to be trifling, why, then, has not the Act been extended in its operation to the breweries, distilleries, soap, bone, oil, &c. &c. factories, which lift on high their towering shafts, and belch forth obnoxious vapours to the prejudices of health, the pollution of architecture, and the abridgment of blessed day amongst the oppidians dwelling along the Thames from Greenwich to Battersea? or why are those externs ("*fuori le mura glia*") between Limehouse and Camden Town, and thence to Brentford, still undressed? Nevertheless, the change, *quoad* the City, makes even to these suburbs a difference in length of day of an hour—in thickness of fog, two candles for a matutinal shave!

Water supply has been long a moot question. This matter has long been a grievance to the whole community; but, like the gas companies, supplying a bad commodity at high charge, the nuisance will enforce its own remedy and abatement: the water will find its level both in

sewers and pipes. Old companies have improved their supply, and will yet go on amending; yet new ones will spring into life; the necessities of a growing population will demand, and will effect a reform.

So in sewage: what municipal care omits, the ravages of an epidemic enforces; what charity to crowded pauperism forgets, self-preservation puts in practice. The scientific have given plan after plan—tunnels, sumpts, engineering projects, centripetal borings,—nevertheless the system to be adopted, and that will be adopted, is simple, and, mayhap, easy, as the application of any new power in modern science. Governmental boards will not do it: they have tried it amongst them: they have given the problem for solution to public competition, but the end is not yet. Doubtless the intentions of all public bodies is good; but London is paved with good intentions.

How calamitous is it to reflect on the inadequacy of public boards! I forbear to name them, whether their walk be in the woods or on the waters. The Victualling Board is certainly not the Board of Health, nor the Admiralty the Irish Board of Control; yet imperfect as all human institutions are, it might be expected that great public works should be carried out in the richest city of earth, since we see such cities as New York and many of our English second-rate towns amply if not perfectly provided as to the requirements of sewage and water. Next to these the great desideratum is pure air: some may class the last first; and those who have admired the clean aspect of Paris and other continental towns,—who have breathed the light, exhilarating atmosphere of Brussels and other capitals even more northerly than our own, cannot fail to appreciate any invention as a blessing that should remove or lighten our own London particular fog. Mr. McKinnon laboured long to achieve the illustration of this newest of all London news: he was at first ridiculed, derided, bantered—nay, persecuted—but he still maintained his point, and may now affirm that "*it moves*."

None can be more gratified by a progress of improvement in these particulars than the artists, builders, and architects of the day, for their works will reap the benefit in enhanced lustre, whilst the generation of the time will breathe, drink, and smell the purer media. Fancy London expurgated as to sewage, the river disinfected, the dull fleece of smoke dispersed, the blacks emancipated from Whitehall, throughout the circle of penny post and cab fares, the limpid gatherings from rainfall flowing fresh and free to every dwelling, the parks attired in nature's purest hues of leaf and blossom, people might become happy and content to live like John Gilpin "twice ten years" within the precincts, and cease to sigh for rural scenery, although enamoured of it as

QUONDAM.

#### NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

**Boston.**—The restoration of St. Botolph's Church is proceeding under the superintendence of Mr. G. G. Place. The whole of the old pews are now levelled, and the excavations prior to laying down the new floor are progressing: the workmen will soon be able to commence the tower groining. The committee have intrusted the great east window to Messrs. O'Connor.

**Essex Coast.**—An extensive project of improvement is proposed to be brought before parliament, having for its object the embankment and reclamation from the sea of the vast green and sumpshire marshes, mudlands, flats, and shoals, on the eastern and southern coasts of Essex, together with the improvement of the rivers Colne and Blackwater. The subscription contract has been signed, we are told, for 162,000*l*.

**Chelmsford.**—The survey and map of Chelmsford made by the Board of Ordnance for the Board of Health, are completed. The map, which is in duplicate, one being on an extended, and the other on a reduced scale, is very minute, every house and its levels being shown. The cost will be about 400*l*. The

local *Chronicle* says it is probable that a plan for the effectual drainage of the town will be carried out in the coming summer.

**Ryde.**—A plan of the esplanade from the clubhouse to the bottom of George-street connected with the pier approaches has been prepared. The cost has been estimated at about 5,000*l*. to be raised by subscription.

**Brighton.**—The inauguration of the extensive range of educational buildings known as the Brighton School, took place on Wednesday week. The dining-hall is 66 feet by 32 feet, and capable of dining 250 boys. In the dormitories, which are fourteen in number, the space allotted to each pupil is from 40 to 50 square feet. The corridors, which extend to nearly 300 feet in length, are covered with a glass roof.

**Wells.**—The works at the cathedral, after another long delay, are again in progress.

**Bridgewater.**—A painted glass window from a design by Mr. W. Brakspear is about to be presented to St. Mary's Church by the mayor, Mr. Thomas Ford. A circular window has been put up over the south porch by Mr. H. Salmon, a plumber and glazier in the town, at his own expense, and the same gentleman has been promoting a subscription towards the erection of another.

**Cheltenham.**—The *Gloucester Chronicle* states that there are now 350 houses untenanted in this town, and that the rents of those occupied have fallen at least 40 per cent., twenty-five of which have fallen within the last three years. It seems to be suffering from the effects of over-speculation in building, and in the dependence on the landed interest. Not many months since, a fine villa in the park, which cost 2,500*l*., was sold by auction for under 1,000*l*.

**Taunton.**—The enlargement of the Archaeological Museum is in contemplation, according to the local *Courier*. It has been proposed that the present entrance to the rooms on the ground-floor should be rendered available as a reading-room, whereby the upper range of the building might be appropriated to the purposes suggested. Messrs. Carver and Giles are preparing a plan and estimate of the probable cost.

**Kidderminster.**—The church of St. Mary is being re-pewed by Mr. Thompson, builder.

**Colton.**—The parish church of St. Mary, Colton, near Rugeley, was consecrated on 27th ult. The architect for the rebuilding was Mr. George E. Street. The new edifice consists of a chancel and aisle, nave, and two aisles, with porch. The old tower stands at the west end. The style is that of the 14th century. The glass in the windows has been executed by Wailes. The chancel is paved with Minton's tiles. The roof is of oak.

**Birkenhead.**—Messrs. Brassey and McCormack, the contractors, have undertaken to complete the Birkenhead Dock works on the original plans. It is understood that they will have for security a portion of the Dock Estate, and that the railway companies will guarantee the interest. —*Liverpool Albion*.

**Manchester.**—The chief stone of new overseers' offices has been laid in Fountain-street. Mr. Thomas Worthington, architect: Mr. Froggatt, builder. The new offices which will also be occupied by the churchwardens of Manchester, will be a three-story building of brick, with stone facings; comprising one large room on the ground-floor, arranged much like a bank, for the general clerks; on the first floor, a board-room, a waiting-room, and assistant overseer's office. On both these floors there will be fire-proof safes. The second floor will be the porter's dwelling. The cellars are to be arched and fire-proof.

**Lancaster.**—Mr. Thomas Ripley, of Liverpool, formerly a merchant in Lancaster, is about to build a school here, and endow it with 10,000*l*.

**Skipton.**—On 22nd ult. the first stone of the church of St. Mary, Skipton, was laid by the vicar. The new church is on a site given by Mr. James Sidgwick, the proprietor of the Kirk estate, and very near the probable site of the ancient church of St. Mary and St. Cuthbert, in Embay, built A.D. 1123, but removed (1150) to Bolton. The funds for the erection of the new church were raised chiefly